

Approved X

Interagency Human Trafficking Task Force  
Meeting Minutes for Victim Services Subcommittee  
Tuesday, November 13, 2012

Convened at 10:09 AM

Members present: Julie Dahlstrom, Tom King, Stephanie DeCandia, Cherie Jimenez, Liam Lowney

Members absent: Audrey Porter, Joe McKown

Additional participants: Corinn Nelson, Heather Wightman

AGO Staff present: Kim Henry

October Meeting Minutes Approved

Upon proper motion made and seconded, the Subcommittee voted to approve the October meeting minutes without changes.

Discussion on Second Tenet: Housing

Members discussed a definition of a “safe home” and how a “safe home” can meet the needs of survivors.

Discussion of definition of human trafficking victim:

- Consider inclusive definition
- Allow eligibility and access to services and resources for victims and survivors

Definition of a ‘safe home/house’

*Draft definition for discussion:* A “safe house” is a separate and secure housing space for victims of commercial sexual exploitations and/or labor trafficking who seek assistance in avoiding future victimization. The safe house should be staffed with survivors and/or credible, trained individuals with experience working with vulnerable populations who can offer survivors individualized exit services and access to survivor-led peer support.

Discussion of how to further revise/amend definition:

- A “safe home” should include and is not limited to the following types of services:
  - Ideally all services on site however realistically not all services will be available on site.
  - Includes both short term and long term housing options.
  - Victim connected to one point person (will look into offender re-entry programs for guidance)
  - Reduce re-victimization, duplication of efforts and multiple times of a survivor telling his/her story
  - Holistic and comprehensive services: should be tailored to the individual’s unique needs (e.g., job training, court issues, education, and assessing benefit eligibility)
  - Staff:
    - Must be system savvy (i.e., can navigate multiple systems)
    - Survivor led (especially support groups/peer groups)

- Support groups should have 3 intertwining focuses and assist survivors to build relationships, support systems and have the ability to change
- Evaluate model programs outside Massachusetts given that many such programs have been in existence for ten or more years and may have promising practices that we can benefit from.
- May have similar or different concerns for labor trafficking:
  - Need worker led model (e.g., worker led mediation) similar to workers center model.
  - Often need housing and not available in current systems in Commonwealth, especially for male and adult survivors.

“Safe home” for children:

- Need additional information from DCF about what is being done for children
- Noncitizen children may be treated differently and placed in federal custody if detained by ICE. They would be placed in the custody of the Office of Refugee Resettlement and then moved to foster care or group home facilities in a variety of locations. Other noncitizen children not in ICE custody will be placed in the DCF system if not brought to the attention of ICE.
- May need to address in recommendations concerns about mandated reporting of DCF to ICE when they identify a noncitizen minor survivor. This was addressed by the New York Task Force in their report to the legislature.
- Consider making specific recommendation for services keeping in mind the unique needs of boys individually.
- Additional information/evaluation required. Tom King volunteered to investigate further regarding DCF programs.

Recommendations for interim planning: Desire to make recommendation for interim period prior to funding for comprehensive program.

- Need for additional funding for shelter beds.
- Basic safety net to ensure survivors are able to exit out and cooperate in investigations/prosecutions

Next steps:

- Create a solid definition of a trafficking victim and/or “safe home”
- Evaluate services outside of Massachusetts to see which make sense to highlight for presentation in January:
  - Breaking Free: Minnesota
  - Children of the Night: California
  - SAGE Project: San Francisco
  - GEMS: New York
  - The Poppy Project: London
- Prepare presentation for January HTTF Meeting

Upon proper motion made and seconded, the Co-Chair adjourned the meeting at 11:23 PM

List of Documents and Exhibits Used by Subcommittee

- Meeting notice/agenda
- November meeting minutes
- Draft of Victim Services Subcommittee Outline
- “Safe Home” draft and evaluation of services outside of Massachusetts

Next meeting: December 10, 2012, 10:00AM at Family Justice Center